AMENDMENT TO THE CLAIMS

This listing of claims will replace all prior versions, and listings, of claims in the application.

LISTING OF THE CLAIMS:

Claim 1. (**Currently amended**) A method of assembling batteries comprising the steps of:

(a) supplying a battery container having a plurality of battery plates and a battery cover having at least two terminal apertures and at least two plate strap mold wells;

(b) heating an open edge of the battery container and an open edge of the battery cover;

(c) providing at least two terminal molds adjacent the at least two terminal apertures in the battery cover;

(d) filling said at least two terminal molds and said at least two plate strap mold wells of the battery cover with molten lead from a lead dispenser/heater unit; ~~and~~

(e) withdrawing said lead dispenser/heater unit and sealing the battery cover to the battery container and substantially simultaneously fusing plate lugs of the battery plates with the molten straps[.] ; and

(f) heating the plate lugs of the battery plates with a heating station before insertion into molten plate straps.

Claim 2. (**Currently amended**) The method of assembling batteries of claim 1, further comprising the step of:

(~~f~~ g) covering exposed areas of molten lead within said ~~heater body~~ lead dispenser/heater unit with an inert gas.

Claim 3. (**Canceled**)

Claim 4. (**Currently Amended**) The method of assembling batteries of claim 1, further comprising the step of:

(~~f~~ g) replenishing a reservoir of molten lead in said lead dispenser/heater unit with a portion of a strip of lead.

Claim 5. (**Currently Amended**) ~~The method of assembling batteries of claim 1, further comprising~~ A method of assembling batteries comprising the steps of:

(a) supplying a battery container having a plurality of battery plates and a battery cover having at least two terminal apertures and at least two plate strap mold wells;

(b) heating an open edge of the battery container and an open edge of the battery cover;

(c) providing at least two terminal molds adjacent the at least two terminal apertures in the battery cover;

(d) filling said at least two terminal molds and said at least two plate strap mold wells of the battery cover with molten lead from a lead dispenser/heater unit;

(e) withdrawing said lead dispenser/heater unit and sealing the battery cover to the battery container and substantially simultaneously fusing plate lugs of the battery plates with the molten straps; and

(f) said lead dispenser/heater unit including a container heating platen, a cover heating platen, heater body and a lead dispensing shuttle plate, said container heating platen being mounted to a top of said heater body, said cover heating platen being attached to a bottom of said heater body, said lead dispensing shuttle plate being slidably retained within said heater body, said lead dispensing shuttle plate dispensing molten lead in a dispensing position and receiving molten lead in a fill position.

Claim 6. (**Original**) The method of assembling batteries of claim 5, further comprising:

a container insulator being disposed between said heater body and said container heating platen, a cover insulator being disposed between said heater body and said cover heating platen, a plurality of heater elements being disposed in said heater body, container heating platen, and cover heating platen.

Claim 7. (**Currently amended**) ~~The method of assembling batteries of claim 1, further comprising~~ A method of assembling batteries comprising the steps of:

(a) supplying a battery container having a plurality of battery plates and a battery cover having at least two terminal apertures and at least two plate strap mold wells;

(b) heating an open edge of the battery container and an open edge of the battery cover;

(c) providing at least two terminal molds adjacent the at least two terminal apertures in the battery cover;

(d) filling said at least two terminal molds and said at least two plate strap mold wells of the battery cover with molten lead from a lead dispenser/heater unit;

(e) withdrawing said lead dispenser/heater unit and sealing the battery cover to the battery container and substantially simultaneously fusing plate lugs of the battery plates with the molten plate straps; and

(f) each said terminal mold having a terminal cavity formed in a top thereof, at least one liquid coolant path and at least one mold heater being formed in a body of each said terminal mold.

Claims 8-19. (**Canceled**)

Claim 20. (**Currently amended**) A method of assembling batteries comprising the steps of:

(a) supplying a battery container having a plurality of battery plates and a battery cover having at least two terminal apertures and at least two plate strap mold wells;

(b) heating an open edge of the battery container and an open edge of the battery cover;

(c) providing at least two terminal molds adjacent the at least two terminal apertures in the battery cover;

(d) protecting molten lead inside a lead dispenser/heater unit from air by flooding all exposed areas of the molten lead with inert gas;

(e) filling said at least two terminal molds and said at least two plate strap mold wells of the battery cover with molten lead from a lead dispenser/heater unit; ~~and~~

(f) withdrawing said lead dispenser/heater unit and sealing the battery cover to the battery container and substantially simultaneously fusing plate lugs of the battery plates with the molten plate straps and at least two terminals[.] ; and

(g) heating the plate lugs of the battery plates with a heating station before insertion into molten plate straps.

Claim 21. (**Canceled**)

Claim 22. (**Currently Amended**) The method of assembling batteries of claim 20, further comprising the step of:

(~~f~~ h) replenishing a reservoir of molten lead in said lead dispenser/heater unit with a portion of a strip of lead.

Claim 23. (**Currently Amended**) ~~The method of assembling batteries of claim 20, further comprising~~ A method of assembling batteries comprising the steps of:

(a) supplying a battery container having a plurality of battery plates and a battery cover having at least two terminal apertures and at least two plate strap mold wells;

(b) heating an open edge of the battery container and an open edge of the battery cover;

(c) providing at least two terminal molds adjacent the at least two terminal apertures in the battery cover;

(d) protecting molten lead inside a lead dispenser/heater unit from air by flooding all exposed areas of the molten lead with inert gas;

(e) filling said at least two terminal molds and said at least two plate strap mold wells of the battery cover with molten lead from a lead dispenser/heater unit;

(f) withdrawing said lead dispenser/heater unit and sealing the battery cover to the battery container and substantially simultaneously fusing plate lugs of the battery plates with the molten plate straps and at least two terminals; and

(g) said lead dispenser/heater unit including a container heating platen, a cover heating platen, a heater body and a lead dispensing shuttle plate, said container heating platen being mounted to a top of said heater body, said cover heating platen being attached to a bottom of said heater body, said lead dispensing shuttle plate being slidably retained within said heater body, said lead dispensing shuttle plate dispensing molten lead in a dispensing position and receiving molten lead in a fill position.

Claim 24. (**Original**) The method of assembling batteries of claim 23, further comprising:

a container insulator being disposed between said heater body and said container heating platen, a cover insulator being disposed between said heater body and said cover heating

platen, a plurality of heater elements being disposed in said heater body, container heating platen, and cover heating platen.

Claim 25. (**Currently amended**) ~~The method of assembling batteries of claim 20, further comprising~~ A method of assembling batteries comprising the steps of:

(a) supplying a battery container having a plurality of battery plates and a battery cover having at least two terminal apertures and at least two plate strap mold wells;

(b) heating an open edge of the battery container and an open edge of the battery cover;

(c) providing at least two terminal molds adjacent the at least two terminal apertures in the battery cover;

(d) protecting molten lead inside a lead dispenser/heater unit from air by flooding all exposed areas of the molten lead with inert gas;

(e) filling said at least two terminal molds and said at least two plate strap mold wells of the battery cover with molten lead from a lead dispenser/heater unit;

(f) withdrawing said lead dispenser/heater unit and sealing the battery cover to the battery container and substantially simultaneously fusing plate lugs of the battery plates with the molten plate straps and at least two terminals; and

(g) each said terminal mold having a terminal cavity formed in a top thereof, at least one liquid coolant path and at least one mold heater being formed in a body of each said terminal mold.